THE DICKENSIAN

A Magazine for Dickens Lovers
and Monthly Record of the Dickens Fellowship

VOL. I. SEPTEMBER, 1905. No. 9.

WHEN FOUND——

MR. CUMING WALTERS'S little book on *Edwin Drood* has created quite a stir in the literary world during the last month. In nearly every instance it has been dealt with as the best-reasoned attempt to solve the mystery, and where a critic has ventured to disagree with Mr. Walters, he has always tempered his dissension with reservation and a general commendation of Mr. Walters's book. The lengthy debate between the author and Mr. William Archer in the *Morning Leader* was interesting, but we do not think Mr. Archer succeeded in establishing his contentions.

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The book has also attracted the attention of Mr. Andrew Lang, who has not only contributed an article on it to the *Morning Post* and another to the *Academy*, but has written a booklet on the subject, which will be published this month by Messrs. Chapman and Hall under the title of *The Puzzle of Dickens's Last Plot.* In it Mr. Lang deals chiefly with the question: Was Edwin Drood slain by his uncle, John Jasper, and if not, how did he escape, and how would Jasper be unaware of his own failure to murder his nephew? There are other subsidiary puzzles of which solutions are offered, and the volume will contain some of Mr. Luke Fildes's original illustrations to assist in their unravelling.

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The George Inn, Amesbury, in regard to which there has been some controversy as to whether it was or was not the original of the "Blue Dragon" of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, has a very interesting article devoted to its antiquity and old-world interest in the *Saturday Review* for 29 July. The writer does not refer to Dickens once throughout, nor does he locate the inn more specifically than by saying it lay off the highway between London and Salisbury. But there is no doubt it is the George Inn which Mr. Harper pictured in a recent number of *The Dickensian* and the beauties of its exterior and neighbourhood, and its history and associations, its interior decorations, carvings, and general old-world comfort are dealt with by a writer imbued with the romance of the old coaching days and ways.

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One of the attractive features of *The Dickensian* this year has been the Dickens Calendar appearing each month. Our readers will be interested to learn that "Old Fleet" is Mr. J. W. T. Ley, and that he has added another quotation for each day, and is publishing the

whole under the title of *The Boz Birthday Book*. The volume, which is to be ready this autumn, will possess an added value in a very full index to subjects as an appendix. The book will be published at 3s. 6d. net by Messrs. Chapman and Hall, who are also issuing a very interesting Dickens souvenir in the shape of a set of thirteen pictorial post cards in reduced facsimile of the cover designs of Dickens's works which appeared in monthly parts. These will comprise the twelve which have been used on the covers of *The Dickensian* during the year, with that of the cover of *Master Humphrey's Clock* added. The price of the set will be 1s. net.

* * *

May we call the attention of our readers to the needs of a society which is doing very noble-hearted work on lines which should and must appeal to lovers of Dickens generally and the members of the Fellowship in particular? It is the National Association for Promoting the Welfare of the Feeble-minded. The aims of the society are to attempt to alleviate the hardships of "the feeble in intellect and will, who have come into the world less richly endowed than their fellows," a situation which the genius of Dickens grasped in *Barnaby Rudge*. We have received a copy of the Ninth Annual Report of the society, on the cover of which is a picture of Barnaby in converse with his raven, and underneath is the quotation from Dickens's book: "Help them in their darkened walk through this sad world, or they are doomed."

* * *

The society has several homes, all of which are in need of assistance. But we appeal on behalf of the "Upshire Home," which is a training home for farm and outdoor work, and the boys in learning are usually able to get fair wages as labourers and dairymen. Larger premises are required, or a small colony of cottage homes, where classification would be possible, and where such boys could remain permanently and earn their living in the colony. Donations and subscriptions, however small, should be sent to Miss A. H. P. Kirby, 72 Denison House, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W., who would also send pamphlet of full details of the society's aims and work.

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The first Conference of Branch Secretaries takes place on the afternoon of Saturday, 2 September, at headquarters. In the evening the delegates will be entertained at dinner at Carr's Charles Dickens Restaurant in the Strand, with Mr. Arthur Waugh in the chair. A few tickets are available for members, and can be obtained of the Hon. General Secretary, price 4s. 6d. each.

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We are indebted for our illustrations this month to the courtesy of Mrs. Snowden Ward, Mr. T. W. Tyrrell, Mr. Elias Miller, and Mr. Charles G. Harper. To the last-named gentleman we also owe our thanks for the loan of the block of the frontispiece reproduction of Palfrey's picture of the exterior of the Bull Inn, Whitechapel. The cover design of the present number is a reproduction of that of *Little Dorrit* used on the covers of the original issue in monthly parts.

THE EDITOR.

DICKENS'S INSTINCT FOR REFORM

BY W. WALTER CROTCH, F.S.S.

I

THERE are people to-day who hold that it is a misuse of terms to describe Dickens as a Social Reformer. That he concerned himself with social questions they freely admit; they deny that he was a democrat or that he ever attained to a theory of reform. Mr. Gissing was probably, more than any one, responsible for the promulgation of this view; inasmuch as from the high vantage-ground of his generous appreciation of the novelist, he subjected his political philosophy to the searching criticism of Collectivist economy.

Not infrequently it is possible to hear men, whose admiration of Dickens as a story-teller is entirely genuine, declaim against his attitude to social problems; avow that he retarded the permanent alleviation of social evils by reconciling the middle classes to the idea of temporary reform; that his scheme of life took no account of economic truths; that he believed all would be well if workmen were honest, sober, industrious, and employers sympathetic, just, and benevolent. The Cheeryble Brothers are alleged to be the embodiment of his views as to the proper relationships between Capital and Labour; and the self-made man and his worldly success are said to represent the ideal which Dickens heartily approved. The whole of these charges concentrated, usually resolve themselves into the assertion that Dickens was a middle-class Radical whose attitude to the poor was one of pity rather than of understanding.

This is a much mistaken view. It is based upon a fundamental error which has vitiated all conclusions. The assumption is that the term "social reform" is inelastic and arbitrary; that to merit the description of "social reformer" a person must have an objective system of economics to propound, must have made a precise science of the remedies for social ills, and be possessed of an exact grasp of industrial physiology. A doctrine at once so narrow and dogmatic as that, would exclude from the category of reformers some of the greatest and most illustrious names in humanitarian literature. Shelley, Byron, Hugo, Coleridge, Browning, Wordsworth, Whitman, all those valiant soldiers in the Army of Freedom, would be ruled out with one stroke of the pen. For none of these understood the precise economic defects which made miseries possible, nor did they understand by what means society would evolve from the chaos of Competition the cosmic order of Collectivism, under which alone it is possible for the liberty and happiness of all to be preserved. These men, on the contrary, were inspired only by indignation against oppression, by impulsive pity for human suffering, by aspirations towards a happy and serene ordering of human affairs of which the mass of men scarce dream, "by the fire of greater passions whose speech and deeds seem madness to the steady world." It was their instinctive sympathy for the fundamental principles of justice out of which reform grows, rather than their actual schemes of social melioration, which made them reformers. If this is true of the poetic band, it is singularly true of Dickens. His, like theirs, was the faith which did not argue; it was all-sufficient to have profound belief and

unswerving conviction. He saw that all men were equal in their relations to the common feelings and duties of the race; that in suffering, in love, in the visions and longings of youth and age, there was an eternal equality, and like all the great poets, his work in this realm has drawn men and women of every class and rank into a closer sympathy with each other, and placed them hand in hand on a common ground of humanity. To him, mere distinctions of class were simply abhorrent. He had a supreme contempt for pride of birth or station. A titled nobility carried with it, not a title to privilege, but an obligation of service, and in book after book we have the same stinging reproof of class insolence and pride, when, as he mostly put it, and it must be added, mostly found it, it was unaccompanied by personal worth. It was the melodious enunciation of such views as these, which gave the great poets their claim to the distinctive titles of "pioneers" and "reformers," and on these grounds neither the one nor the other can be denied to Dickens.

Moreover, as Mr. Hobson very pertinently points out, if we use the term "social reform" in the broad sense to describe those larger changes in the working of society which aim directly at some general improvement of human life as distinguished from such work of reform as attacks narrower and more specific defects, we shall find that men come to this work by widely different paths. Often it is the personal experience of some concrete evil that first awakens a sense of social wrong and a desire for redress; reform energy once generated is fed by a natural flow from various neighbouring channels of activity, the stream broadening as it goes, until the man whose early activity was stimulated by the desire to break down some little barrier which dams the stream in his back garden, finds himself breasting the tide of some oceanic movement. On the other hand, there are men who come to social reform work out of simply impulse and emotion arising out of a detailed knowledge of the facts of life as a thing apart from economics or a science of government. And that was so in the case of Dickens. All his work was the outcome of accurate analytic observation and close scrutiny; his excursions into the regions of social problems were due to the fact that he found his heart aflame for social justice, and the passion of revolt against tyranny and oppression stirred within him.

It is true that Dickens had but the most elementary knowledge of political economy as such. Indeed, he appears to have shared the old and not too accurate idea that political economy was a dry-as-dust hobby, in which sociologists and other uninviting people constantly speculated. What is, however, equally certain is, that in the reference he did make to it he vowed emphatically that he shared Ruskin's view that no scheme of life, no political organization of industry, was or would be complete which did not provide that all labour should only be pursued under conditions which would allow human qualities full play and which would promote the whole round of human happiness. Ruskin's full, final conception of political economy as a science of human welfare, we are told, included within its scope not merely the processes by which men gain a livelihood, but all human efforts and satisfactions. It was, in short, the famous Spencerian dogma, that the essential question to all of us is how to live, not in the material sense

merely, but in the widest sense, or as the philosopher put it himself, "the general problem which comprehends every special problem is the right ruling of conduct in all directions, under all circumstances." And that consciously or unconsciously is the general moral to be drawn from all the vague and sometimes whimsical theories of human relationship which Dickens scattered throughout his books.

His emotions and impulses led him to insist that industry ought not to be regarded as the whole of life nor a thing apart from life. The organization of labour must neither involve the suppression of the personal human qualities of either employer or employed, nor must any commercial concern be conducted on such a basis that the man as a worker was considered quite apart from his position as man the human. Dickens's criticism of the teachings of the economists was sentimental rather than scientific, but he poured out the vials of his wrath none the less effectively upon the school who have their representatives in Mr. Gradgrind. "It was a fundamental principle of the Gradgrind philosophy that everything was to be paid for. Nobody was ever on any account to give anybody anything or render anybody help without purchase. Gratitude was to be abolished, and the virtues springing from it were not to be. Every inch of the existence of mankind from birth to death was to be a bargain across a counter. And if we didn't get to heaven it was not a politico-economical place, and we had no business there." Here in inimitable satire is his repudiation of the theory of the mercantile economists that "the whole social system is a matter of self-interest," and that "man as an industrial animal, a getter and spender of money, is a separate thing from man as a friend, a lover, a father, a citizen."

This, it seems to me, is the most effective reply to the critics who urge that the relationships of the Cheeryble Brothers to Tim Linkinwater and Nicholas Nickleby represented Dickens's ideal of masters and men. It is true that the Cheeryble Brothers stood for a moral theory with the novelist. It is not that the labour problem could be disposed of by benevolence or unselfishness on the part of employers so much as the recognition that the best labour is only performed by men when they are happiest. Examine story after story, and there emerges the same idea. Master and man prospered where the relationship between them was such as to bring the affection of both into full play. Gratitude, forbearance, kindness, sympathy, on the part of the master has its counterpart in the devotion and increased fidelity of the workman to his work. That was Dickens's theory; that is the theory which the critics affect to despise, because it leaves untouched the larger question of such an organization of society as shall give these very desirable virtues full play, and shall render unemployment and poverty impossible. Yet, if it is examined minutely, it will be seen that in this very theory the soundest, and indeed the only true political economy had expression. Men may grope blindly in the dark, and yet stumble across truth, if they do but follow courageously the promptings of the human heart towards fraternity. In our days we are sifting the inhumanities from political economy. We are realizing that it is an unnatural divorce—that of separating the highest attributes of our humanity from the science of human well-being. And Dickens, with nothing but his intuitive

sympathies, stumbled across the very fact which Ruskin made the basis of his scheme of industrial physiology, namely, that the motive power of man's labour is man's soul.

"The largest quantity of work will not be done for pay or under pressure. It will be done only when the motive force, that is to say, the will or spirit of the creature, is brought up to its greatest strength by its own proper fuel, namely, by the affections." In short, the whole lesson of the Cheeryble Brothers is a splendid pleading for the abolition of merely personal profit as the object, end, or motive of industry. Profit is only justified for the social service it can render; the wealth which the Cheerybles derived was devoted to the ends which made for happiness. That, surely, is not merely sound social reform teaching; it is sound Socialism as well. At least, it is that Socialism which Ruskin crystallized in one pregnant phrase when he said, "The final outcome and consummation of all wealth is in the producing, as many as possible, full-breathed, bright-eyed, and happy-hearted human beings."

It was Dickens's general humanitarian revolt against the aristocratic tyranny of his time which induced the critics to speak of him as merely the advocate of the poor who pleaded with the middle classes to bestow some charity on the less fortunate. Of course he was more than that. He possessed the democratic instinct for popular equality, and held firmly his faith in the people. "My moral creed—which is a very wide and comprehensive one, and includes all sects and parties—is very easily summed up," he said in a speech in 1842. "I have faith, and I wish to diffuse faith in the existence—yes, of beautiful things, even in those conditions of society who are so degenerate, degraded, and forlorn, that at first sight it would seem as though they could not be described, but by a strange and terrible reversal of scripture, 'God said, Let there be light, and there was none.' I take it that we are born, and that we hold our sympathies, hopes, and energies *in trust for the many and not for the few.* That we cannot hold in too strong a light of disgust and contempt before the view of others all meanness, falsehood, cruelty, and oppression of every grade and kind. Above that nothing is high because it is in a high place; and that nothing is low because it is in a low one." Here the note struck is obviously one of the most intensely democratic. Only when our energies and our strength, our gifts and our abilities, are used for "the many," are we faithful custodians. The treasures of life are only justified when they are shared by the mass and not by the privileged class. Later, in the same speech indeed, he emphasized the sin of selfishness and the futility as well as the wickedness of imagining that it is possible for men to have happiness in isolation from their fellows. We are members one of another, and individual progress is impossible apart from some measure of general progress, or at least apart from some earnest interest in the promotion of such general progress, we lack the essential element in our own individual culture. What William Morris so often tried to teach us, namely, that class art must necessarily be base and vulgar, and that only that art which arises naturally out of the free and joyous life of "the many" can be true and beautiful, all else wearing the chain and stamp of the commercialism upon which it rests, Dickens himself held to be sovereign truth. There is neither life, nor joy, nor

art possible in selfish isolation; these can only come as the product of the common life of the nation; they must not be denied the many and given to the few; they can only come as a reward for a faithful share in the common round. When Dickens taught that he foreshadowed the Collectivist idea, which is coming so largely to dominate our social thinking to-day, and one which is based upon the soundest and most incontrovertible democratic principles. Nor was this proclamation of the rights of "the many" an isolated one. Again and again one comes across references to the same thought differently expressed.

(*To be concluded.*)

CALENDAR OF DICKENS QUOTATIONS

COMPILED BY "OLD FLEET"

Sept. 1.—"The despisers of mankind—apart from the mere fools and mimics of that creed—are of two sorts. They who believe their merit neglected, unappreciated, make up one class; they who receive adulation and flattery, knowing their own worthlessness, compose the other. Be sure that the coldest-hearted misanthropes are ever of this last order."—*Barnaby Rudge.*

Sept. 2.—"If our inclinations are but good and open-hearted, let us gratify them boldly, though they bring us Loss instead of Profit."—*Martin Chuzzlewit*—Mr. Pecksniff.

Sept. 3.—"Airiness and good spirits are always delightful, and are inseparable from notes of a cheerful trip; but they should sympathise with many things as well as see them in a lively way. It is but a word or touch that expresses this humanity, but without that little embellishment of good nature there is no such thing as humour."—*Letter to Mr. Frank Stone.*

Sept. 4.—"It is right to begin with the obligations of home; and while those are neglected no other duties can possibly be substituted for them."—*Bleak House*—Esther Summerson.

Sept. 5.—"There's always a straight way to everything."—*Our Mutual Friend*—Mrs. Boffin.

Sept. 6.—"There is one among the many forms of despair—perhaps the most pitiable of all—which persists in disguising itself as Hope."—*No Thoroughfare.*

Sept. 7.—"If you can't get to be oncommon through going straight, you'll never get to do it through going crooked."—*Great Expectations*—Joe Gargery.

Sept. 8.—"In love of home the love of country has its rise."—*Old Curiosity Shop.*

Sept. 9.—"I most sincerely impress upon you the truth and beauty of the Christian Religion, as it came from Christ Himself, and the impossibility of your going far wrong if you humbly but heartily respect it."—*Letter to his son* (Mr. E. B. L. Dickens).

Sept. 10.—"We must be patient, and bear with old folks' foibles."—*Barnaby Rudge*—Gabriel Varden.

Sept. 11.—"Even age and weakness have their consolations."—*Master Humphrey's Clock.*

Sept. 12.—"Subdue your appetites, my dears, and you've conquered human nature."—*Nicholas Nickleby*—Mr. Squeers.

Sept. 13.—"All kind things must be done on their own account, and without the least reference to any gratitude."—*Letter quoted in Forster's "Life."*

Sept. 14.—"Him who never did a miracle but to heal; who never struck a man with palsy, blindness, deafness, dumbness, madness—any one affliction of mankind; and never stretched His blessed hand out but to give relief and ease."—*Pictures from Italy.*

Sept. 15.—"Knowledge . . . has a very limited power indeed, when it informs the head alone; but when it informs the head and the heart too, it has a power over life and death, the body and the soul, and dominates the universe."—*Speech at Manchester.*

Sept. 16.—"A lady can't be hock'erd. Natur has otherwise purwided."—*Master Humphrey's Clock*—Mr. Weller, sen.

Sept. 17.—"In this round world of many circles within circles do we make a

weary journey from the high grade to the low to find at last that they lie close together, that the two extremes touch; that our journey's end is but our starting-place?" —*Dombey and Son.*

Sept. 18.—"The man who reviews his own life would need to have been a good man indeed if he would be spared the sharp consciousness of many talents neglected, many opportunities wasted, many erratic and perverted feelings constantly at war within his breast and defeating him."—*David Copperfield.*

Sept. 19.—"How common the saying, 'The morning's too fine to last'! How well it might be applied to our everyday existence!"—*Pickwick Papers*—The Dismal Man.

Sept. 20.—"Though lovers are remarkable for leaving a great deal unsaid on all occasions, and very properly desiring to come back to say it, they are remarkable also for a wonderful power of condensation, and can, in one way or other, give utterance to more language—eloquent language—in any given short space of time than all the six hundred and fifty-eight members of the Commons House of Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland."—*Martin Chuzzlewit.*

Sept. 21.—"The good in this state of existence preponderates over the bad, let miscalled philosophers tell us what they will. If our affections be tried, our affections are our consolation and comfort; and memory, however sad, is the best and purest link between this world and a better."—*Nicholas Nickleby*—The Merry-Faced Gentleman.

Sept. 22.—"The miserably poor man (no matter whether he owes his distress to his own conduct or that of others), who feels his poverty and vainly strives to conceal it, is one of the most pitiable objects in human nature."—*Sketches by Boz.*

Sept. 23.—"It is a most extraordinary thing that these Philanthropists are always denouncing somebody, but it is another most extraordinary thing that they are always so violently flush of miscreants."—*Edwin Drood*—Rev. Septimus Crisparkle.

Sept. 24.—"It has, somehow or other, happened, from time immemorial, that many of the best and ablest philosophers, who have been perfect lights of science in matters of theory, have been wholly unable to reduce them to practice."—*Pickwick Papers.*

Sept. 25.—"She's a rum 'un, is Natur."—*Nicholas Nickleby*—Mr. Squeers.

Sept. 26.—"The disturbed mind and affections, like the tossed sea, seldom calms without an intervening time of confusion and trouble."—*Letter to Mrs. Henry Austis.*

Sept. 27.—"There are at least some well-disposed men in the world."—*Sketches by Boz*—Mr. Nicodemus Dumps.

Sept. 28.—"This is a most wretched sort of affair, this world is! Somebody's always dying, or going and doing something uncomfortable in it."—*Dombey and Son* —Mr. Toots.

Sept. 29.—"That temptation—so irresistible to the female mind—of hearing something at present enveloped in mystery."—*Pickwick Papers.*

Sept. 30.—"An ancient proverb reminds us that we should not expect to find old heads upon young shoulders; to which it may be added that we seldom meet with that unnatural combination, but we feel a strong desire to knock them off; merely from an inherent love we have of seeing things in their right places."—*Martin Chuzzlewit.*

DICKENS MEMORIAL SUNDIAL AND BAROMETER

IT will be remembered that on the demolition of old Rochester Bridge, inseparably connected with the Pickwickians, Charles Dickens had one of the balustrades made into a sundial and set up in his garden at Gadshill. It was a happy idea of Messrs. Francis Barker and Son, of Clerkenwell Road, who possess the original, to make facsimiles of it, and to decorate the cap of it with a portrait of the novelist and the names of his books. They have also manufactured a hall barometer, and a combined barometer and thermometer, for drawing-room or library, both of which are handsomely decorated with similar Dickensian devices as the pedestal sundial. Full particulars and prices can be had of the makers.

A NATIONAL DICKENS LIBRARY

THE late Mr. F. G. Kitton, who was one of the most enthusiastic members of the Dickens Fellowship, and had an unrivalled knowledge of Dickensiana, left a most comprehensive collection, and the Council of the Fellowship are making a world-wide appeal for funds to enable them to purchase this collection, with a view to its forming the nucleus of a National Dickens Library. The following is a copy of a letter which has been circulated to the English, American, and Colonial Press. It is hoped that members of the Fellowship will respond to this appeal. The scheme has the support and interest of Miss Georgina Hogarth, and has nowhere met with disapproval. Members of the Fellowship and admirers of Dickens generally are urged to use their endeavours to assist the Council in its endeavours to promote this scheme.

DEAR SIR,—Owing to the death of the late Mr. F. G. Kitton an opportunity presents itself of acquiring for the nation a collection of Dickensiana which is probably unique. It comprises some 300 books on Dickens and his works, the majority of these being autograph copies; over 200 different portraits of the novelist; numerous volumes of magazine and newspaper articles relating to Dickens; pictures, programmes, play-bills, etc.; autograph letters from famous admirers of the novelist; several plays based upon the novels; original reports of speeches by Dickens; numerous pamphlets, etc. There is also a splendid collection of original Dickens drawings, by such well-known artists as Brock, Leslie Ward, Rainey, and others, as well as many drawings by the late Mr. Kitton himself (including most of the originals of his illustrations to "A Week's Tramp in Dickens Land"). It is unnecessary to say that many of the articles in the collection are unique and not possible of duplication.

The Dickens Fellowship, of which Mr. Kitton was a Vice-President, has appointed a Committee which has been for some months engaged in examining the collection. This Committee has been in negotiation with the Library Committee of the Corporation of London for the acceptance of the collection, with the object of it forming the nucleus of a National Dickens Library.

The Library Committee have expressed their readiness to accept the collection, to house it, and to make it accessible to the public; and the Council of the Fellowship having carefully considered the matter, now earnestly appeal for the funds necessary for the purchase.

Charles Dickens was, during his lifetime, and is to-day, thirty-five years after his death, England's most popular novelist. He holds a place in the affections of the English-speaking people which is unrivalled by any other writer, living or dead, and therefore we make this appeal with confidence, believing as we do that a national library would appropriately help to perpetuate his memory and the good work which he strove so earnestly to do.

We need hardly point out that for such a memorial no more fitting home could be found than the centre of the great metropolis he loved so well.

Any contributions to the fund will be acknowledged in the weekly and monthly organs of the Fellowship, "Household Words" and "The Dickensian" respectively.

We are, yours very faithfully,

(Signed) JAMES E. PALMER, *Chairman of Council.*
J. W. T. LEY, *Hon. General Secretary.*

On another page of the present issue will be found a complete bibliography of the late F. G. Kitton's writings on Dickens.

THROUGH WHITECHAPEL WITH DICKENS

By B. W. MATZ

ILLUSTRATED BY C. G. HARPER AND FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY T. W. TYRRELL, CATHARINE WEED WARD, AND E. MILLER

THERE were few, if any, districts of the great metropolis of Dickens's time with which he was not thoroughly acquainted. His love of walking took him into many strange places, afterwards to be introduced into his novels and minor writings. To students of his books these places are familiar to a great extent, and have been sought out by the devoted pilgrim in many a tramp with guide-book in hand. One of the lesser-known districts connected with Dickens and his works, however, is Whitechapel, yet Dickens made the East End of London the venue of many a ramble. "My day's no-business beckoning me to the East-end of London," he says on one occasion, "I had turned my face to that point of the Metropolitan compass on leaving Covent Garden, and had got past my Little Wooden Midshipman, after affectionately patting him on one leg of his knee-shorts for old acquaintance sake, and had got past Aldgate Pump, and had got past the Saracen's Head (with an ignominious rash of posting bills disfiguring his swarthy countenance), and had strolled up the empty yard of his ancient neighbour, the Black or Blue Boar, or Bull, who departed this life I don't know when and whose coaches are all gone I don't know where; and I had come out again into the age of railways, and I had got past Whitechapel Church and was in the Commercial Road." And in more than one of his *Uncommercial* papers he speaks of having found himself drawn in the same direction to visit the district where he had "pleasantly wallowed in the abundant mud of that thoroughfare." The district had a fascination for him, as all places had where he could find abundant material for the study of humanity, the state of humanity which wanted lifting, as we know he attempted to lift it and throw the limelight of his pen upon for the world to see and help.

WOODEN MIDSHIPMAN

From photograph by Catharine Weed Ward

In the following pages it is my intention to follow in the footsteps of Dickens through Whitechapel, and visit the places he visited, as well as those introduced into his writings.

Starting from Bishopsgate Street, we turn up Brushfield Street, and continue until Commercial Street is reached, then turn to the right to Flower and Dean Street, where at the corner of Commercial Street is a dull and elegant-looking warehouse of four floors, now in the occupation of a wholesale clothier. There is nothing in the building calculated to attract the passer-by, or even the sightseer, until he knows its history. But the building has a history and an

interest for the Dickensian. Years ago and up to the early eighties it was a cooking depôt for the workers in the district, and the excellence of its fare, the cheapness of its food, the cleanliness of its building, the expeditiousness of its serving, and the co-operative system upon which it was worked, attracted the keen eye and the philanthropic spirit of the creator of the two immortal Samuels. Accordingly he went there one day and dined with the rest, for fourpence-halfpenny. So satisfied was he that by way of emphasizing the quality of this fourpence-halfpennyworth, he says, "I dined at my club in Pall Mall a few days afterwards for exactly twelve times the money, and not half as well." He had been attracted by a rose-coloured handbill, on which the virtues of the place were displayed.

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COOKING DEPÔT
FOR THE WORKING CLASSES,
COMMERCIAL STREET,
WHITECHAPEL.

Where Accommodation is Provided
for Dining Comfortably
300 Persons at a Time.

Open from 7 a.m. till 7 p.m.

SELF-SUPPORTING COOKING DEPÔT
From a photograph by T. W. Tyrrell

Then followed the list of "All Articles of the Best Quality," with their prices affixed. All the details of this bill, and the full account of the working and merits of the establishment, comprises the paper in the *Uncommercial Traveller*, entitled "The Boiled Beef of New England." The building to-day coincides with Dickens's description, except that it no longer is used as a "cooking depôt."

Leaving the building, we turn back again along Commercial Street into Hanbury Street, across which runs Brick Lane, a name that will recall to the reader recollections of a famous meeting given by "The Brick Lane Branch of the United Grand Junction Ebenezer Temperance Association," where the ladies sat upon forms and drank tea "until such time as they considered it expedient to leave off." The meeting was held "in a large room, pleasantly and airily situated at the top of a safe and commodious ladder." This building and its ladder exist to-day up a passage leading out of Brick Lane by the side of No. 160. The only way it differs from the original description is that the Mission Hall is at the bottom of the ladder instead of at the top, whilst the room at the top is used as a carpenter's shop. But there is the self-same ladder up which Brother Tadger "stumbled with Mr. Stiggins," on the memorable occasion described with so much humour in the *Pickwick Papers*, and where later on, in the evening, Mr. Stiggins "hit Brother Tadger on the summit of the nose with such unerring

aim" as to knock him "head first down the ladder." Stepping into the Mission Hall downstairs, one's mind reverts to the scene which took place overhead, as Sam Weller and his father found it, where everybody was drinking tea at such a rate as to cause Mr. Weller much anxiety about the "young 'ooman as has drunk nine breakfast cups and a half; and she's swellin' wisibly before my wery eyes," and where he afterwards, in a remote corner of the room, "attacked the reverend Mr. Stiggins with manual dexterity."

In the original editions of *Pickwick* this incident, although well suited to Phiz's pen, was not illustrated. But Phiz did a spirited picture of Mr. Weller attacking Mr. Stiggins for the Household Edition, and another of the scene as a frontispiece to the first cheap edition. We reproduce here, however, a photograph of the outside as it is to-day.

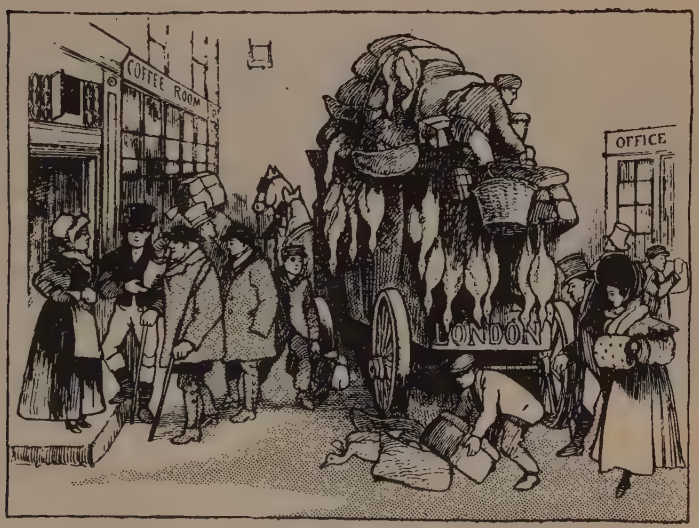
BRICK LANE BRANCH OF THE UNITED GRAND JUNCTION EBENEZER TEMPERANCE ASSOCIATION

From a photograph by Elias Miller

From the Mission Hall we journey to Thomas Street, not far distant, which will recall a different scene altogether. Here is the entrance to the casual ward of the Whitechapel Workhouse. It was here that Dickens, who had sallied out one wintry rainy evening in November, 1855, for one of his night walks, full of thoughts of *Little Dorrit*, which he was then writing, almost suddenly "pulled himself up" at a strange sight which arrested him. Against the dreary enclosure of the house were leaning, in the midst of the downpouring rain and storm, what seemed to be seven heaps of rags—"dumb, wet, silent horrors," he described them, "sphinxes set up against the dead wall, and no one likely to be at the pains of solving them until the General Overthrow." He tried to help them by appealing to the master of the workhouse, but the casual ward was full, and help in that direction was not possible. The rag heaps were all girls, and after giving each a shilling, for which he received no thanks whatever, he walked silently away with his mind full of reflections on the low ebb to which humanity may sometimes come.

From here, too, we turn, with the scene as described by Forster in our mind, and wend our way down Vallance Road into the great highway of Whitechapel Road, undoubtedly one of the finest roads in London, and turn to the left until the spot known as Mile End Gate is reached. Here the old Gate House stood until recently.

Mr. Pickwick's journey to Ipswich took him, of course, down the Whitechapel Road. "Take care o' the archway, gen'l'men," was Sam's timely warning as the coach started from the Bull Inn, referred to at the beginning of this article, which was situated where Aldgate Avenue now stands. It was long since demolished. At the time Whitechapel Road was noted for its array of oyster-stalls, which prompted the loquacious Sam's remarks about "poverty and oysters" always going together, and by way of emphasizing the coincidence he added, "Blessed if I don't think that ven a man's wery poor he rushes out of his lodgings, and eats oysters in reg'lar despration." And Mr. Pickwick promised to make a note of the "remarkable fact" when the coach next stopped. In passing through the gate Mr. Weller



THE BULL INN YARD

From a drawing by C. G. Harper

senior offered some dissertation on pike-keepers, whilst many other points in the road attracted the attention of the travellers.

The Bull Inn, kept by Mrs. Ann Nelson at the time, was one of the very best of the old coaching inns, and there is no doubt Dickens was well acquainted with its solid and restful comfort. An illustration of it forms a frontispiece to the present issue. It was noted for its specially reserved room for coachmen and guards, where those worthies regaled themselves with the best the house could provide. It was more sacred and exclusive than the commercial-rooms of the old bagmen days, and was strictly unapproachable by others than those for whom it was set apart. On one occasion, however, says Mr. Harper in his book *Stage Coach and Mail in Days of Yore*, Dickens had a seat at the table, and "the chairman, after sundry flattering remarks, as a tribute to the novelist's power of describing a coach journey, said, 'Mr. Dickens, we

knows you knows wot's wot, but can you, sir, 'andle a vip?' There was no mock modesty in Dickens. He acknowledged he *could* describe a journey down the road, but he regretted that in the management of a 'vip' he was not expert."

Near by the "Bull" was that other old coaching inn, the "Blue Boar," to which David Copperfield came on that memorable journey from Yarmouth. "We approached London by degrees," he says, "and got in due time to the inn, in the Whitechapel district. I forget whether it was the 'Blue Bull' or the 'Blue Boar,' but I know it was the Blue something, and that its likeness was painted on the back of the coach." Naturally this inn has also been swept away, but a sculptured effigy of a boar, with gilded tusks and hoofs, built into the wall of a tobacco factory, marks the site where it once stood.

TITBULL'S ALMSHOUSES
From a photograph by T. W. Tyrrell

Continuing our journey farther along into the Mile End Road, we come upon the Vintners' Almshouses. There is no doubt that Dickens had these in his mind when writing the twenty-ninth chapter of the *Uncommercial Traveller*, which he called "Titbull's Alms Houses." He refers to them as in the east of London, in a great highway, in a poor, busy, and thronged neighbourhood. There is "a little paved courtyard in front enclosed by iron railings, which have got snowed up, as it were, by bricks and mortar; which were once in a suburb, but are now in the densely-populated town; gaps in the busy life around them, parenthesis in the close and blotted texts of the streets." All this, and much more in the same paper, notably the piece of sculptured drapery a-top the inscription stone "resembling the effigy of Titbull's bath towel," applies to the Vintners' Almshouses as they are to-day. Let us stand and conjure up the picture of the Greenwich pensioner with an "empty sleeve," accompanied by his friend the Chelsea pensioner with one leg, calling and taking Mrs. Mitts away to be married, as delightful a picture as Dickens presented, and then return towards Aldgate again, passing on our way once more Whitechapel Church, which attracted the attention of Dickens so often.

"The Little Wooden Midshipman," referred to previously, also appears in *Dombey and Son* as the original of Sol Gills's sign "which thrust itself out above the pavement, right leg foremost, with a suavity the least endurable . . . and bore at his right eye the most offensively disproportionate piece of machinery . . ." taking observations of

the hackney coaches. This "woodenest" of effigies can still be seen at Messrs. Norie and Wilson's, 156, Minories, E., who once occupied premises in Leadenhall Street, as did Sol Gills.

It has been noted many times how Dickens made use of nearly everything he saw in his peregrinations, and it was not likely that such an historic monument as Aldgate Pump would escape his notice. He several times makes passing references to it, and introduces it into *Dombey and Son*. It will be remembered that Mr. Toots took a walk to it and back again for relaxation. There are many references to it in a general way, and it was to the neighbourhood that Fagin removed for fear of Oliver's "peaching," and it was from Whitechapel that the Gordon Rioters' procession started for Newgate.

ALDGATE PUMP

From photograph by Catharine Weed Ward

POETICAL TRIBUTES TO CHARLES DICKENS

IX

"LORD, KEEP MY MEMORY GREEN"

THY pray'r is answer'd, blest and genial Shade!
The mem'ry of thy many golden deeds
Of kindness and true charity still lives.
And hearts the wide world o'er are daily made
The brighter and the stronger, and their needs
Are succour'd by the hope thy message gives!

* * * *

O, great and gentle lover of mankind—
With all its faults and foibles—may we learn
What thou hast taught in many a printed page,—
There is "a soul of goodness" in them all!
May we, like thee, "be just a little blind"
To merely human weaknesses, and yearn
And strive to serve and elevate the age:
Then shall we, too, receive the Upward Call!

D. H. B.

Adelaide, South Australia, 9th June, 1905.

THE HISTORY OF A MYSTERY

A REVIEW OF THE SOLUTIONS TO "EDWIN DROOD"

By GEORGE F. GADD

CHAPTER I

AUTHENTIC SUGGESTIONS

DURING the progress of *Barnaby Rudge* a startling disclosure of Dickens's carefully-guarded secret—the surprise concerning the supposed murder of Rudge, steward to Reuben Haredale—was prematurely made by an American writer whose genius for imagination and mystery has become world-famous. Edgar Allan Poe's *tour-de-force* was, in fact, astonishingly accurate, and highly remarkable as the result of penetrating insight and scientific inference, but its quotation in these pages is merely intended to suggest that, had Poe survived Charles Dickens, and brought his peculiar powers to bear upon the mystery of *Edwin Drood*, a not unconvincing solution would have issued from his pen. Assuredly, in that event, much nonsense which has been written on this subject would never have seen the light, and, on the other hand, clever but misguided analysts might have been denied the thrill arising from an inborn conviction of triumph.

The Mystery of Edwin Drood is a particularly perplexing problem for two important reasons. In the first place, it is full of misleading suggestion: redolent of the red herring drawn across the path. In the second place, the amount of external hint or clue left by the novelist is disappointingly small, and does not go far towards helping out the sequel.

The first suggestion of mystery peeps out in a letter sent by Dickens to his friend John Forster on 6 August, 1869. "I laid aside the fancy I told you of, and have a very curious and new idea for my new story. Not a communicable one (or the interest of the book would be gone), but a very strong one, though difficult to work." Part of this curious idea Forster was able to disclose at the latter end of his admirable biography.

"The story," he explains, "was to be that of the murder of a nephew by his uncle, the originality of which was to consist in the review of the murderer's career by himself at the close. . . . The last chapters were to be written in the condemned cell, to which his wickedness, all elaborately elicited from him as if told of another, had brought him. Discovery by the murderer of the utter needlessness of the murder for its object was to follow hard upon commission of the deed; but all discovery of the murder was to be baffled till towards the close, when, by means of a gold ring which had resisted the corrosive effects of the lime into which he had thrown the body, not only the person murdered was to be identified, but the locality of the crime and the man who committed it. . . . Rosa was to marry Tartar, and Crisparkle, the sister of Landless, who was himself to have perished in assisting Tartar finally to unmask and seize the murderer."

It is interesting to observe how unfailingly this statement agrees with the written part of the story. John Jasper, the guilty uncle, is, we

know, consumed by a secret passion for Rosa Bud, Drood's betrothed. He encourages, while seeming to deprecate, the quarrelsome spirit arising between his nephew and Neville Landless. He indulges in strange nocturnal excursions about the cathedral, in company with Durdles the stonemason, and makes the acquaintance of several keys, including that of Mrs. Sapsea's vault. On the first of these expeditions he is warned off a heap of quicklime. "Quick enough," says Durdles, "with a little handy stirring, to eat your bones." Further, the story introduces a diamond ring, entrusted to Edwin by Rosa's guardian, Mr. Grewgious, and to be returned in case doubt exists on either side as to the wisdom of the betrothal. The boy and girl agree to part, and Edwin, in consequence, makes no reference to the jewel in his pocket.

After Drood has disappeared, such of his valuables as Jasper is aware of are found in the river, but nothing more is told of the ring. Finally, Grewgious comes to Cloisterham and calls upon the stricken uncle. Choosing a most inappropriate occasion, and almost entirely ignoring the catastrophe, he imparts the comparatively insignificant news of the broken engagement; whereat Jasper swoons away, not at all to the surprise of Grewgious, who evidently knows that he has disclosed "the needlessness of the murder for its object."

We are enormously indebted to Forster for the light thrown upon the intended use of the betrothal ring. Even Poe's powers might have failed to connect this bauble with the heap of lime in the mason's yard. Not so much reliance, however, is to be placed upon the statement that the original part of the scheme was Jasper's confession in the cell, though there is little doubt that the villain was to come to that ignominious end. Dickens himself shows that the real mystery lay in another direction. Writing to Mr. J. T. Fields in January of 1870, he thus refers to his work: "There is a curious interest steadily working up to number 5, which requires a great deal of art and self-denial. . . . I hope, at numbers 5 and 6, the story will turn upon an interest suspended until the end."

The novelist evidently refers to the appearance upon the scene of Mr. Dick Datchery, the mysterious white-haired stranger who keeps such a close watch upon Jasper, and who is so elated by the discovery of an old opium woman from London, come down to Cloisterham to track the villain, that the hieroglyphic score upon the inside of his cupboard is made to record an almost overwhelming access of intelligence.

The identity of Datchery is enshrouded in mist; it is the heart of the entire problem, and has been interpreted in a variety of ways, as we shall see. Yet this character forms the subject of the only detached note of any importance left by the author.

The first number-plan, or sketch-chapter, of the story—"Mr. Sapsea. Old Tory Jackass, connect Jasper with him (He will want a solemn donkey by and by)"—does no more than confirm our certainty of Jasper's guilt, but the accidentally discovered manuscript called, "How Mr. Sapsea ceased to be a member of the Eight Club," gives us a group of new characters, throws a possible light upon Datchery, and enables a more complete estimate to be formed of the great Mr. Sapsea him-

self. The chapter is fully quoted in Forster's "Life," but the part of it which most nearly concerns the mystery-solver is the broken fragment of conversation between the inflated auctioneer and the obsequious Mr. Poker, for the latter is surely a study sketch of the "Idle Buffer" who lived upon his means, at Mrs. Tope's, in Cloisterham.

In the following chapters it is intended to set forth data which, it is hoped, may not only be interesting reading, but be sufficient to give a clear idea of the nature of the many different solutions of the "mystery" which have been published in this country and in America, and so present a complete record of all that has been written on the subject, much of which is not easily accessible to the general reader to-day.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST SOLUTION

"RUMOUR," said Miss Twinkleton to the ladies of her select seminary, "has been represented by the Bard of Avon as painted full of tongues."

Some of these tongues were very busily whispering shortly after it became known that Dickens had not lived long enough to finish his work: whispering that another writer would be appointed to supply the deficiency; that the younger Charles, or Wilkie Collins, or both, or some other, had already been approached on the matter. So persistent, in fact, did these "airy breaths" become, that at length it was deemed advisable to issue an authoritative denial. This took the form of a letter to the *Times*, from Messrs. Chapman and Hall, who emphatically stated that the three numbers still in hand would be published without any added matter whatsoever. "No other writer," they asserted, "could be permitted by us to complete the work which Mr. Dickens left." And, to the present day, this very commendable attitude has been preserved by the excellent firm so long associated with the works of our author.

But there was the unauthorized Continuator to reckon with, which genus was particularly active during the early days following the death of Dickens. It may, or may not, be a tribute to our national modesty that none of these hasty attempts to assume the cloak of the Prophet is of British origin, but it is not the less certain that, for a number of years, America virtually held a monopoly in continuations of *Edwin Drood*.

We may now examine these extraordinary attempts in some detail.

Right of priority, at least, is due to Mr. R. H. Newell, who, as "Orpheus C. Kerr," published in 1870 an extravagant burlesque entitled *The Cloven Foot*, professedly "an adaptation of the English novel to American scenes, characters, customs, and nomenclature." Originally issued at New York, this grotesque work found its way to London, where it first received notice in the pages of the *Piccadilly Annual* for 1870. In the following year an English edition was printed, under a new title, *The Mystery of Mr. E. Drood*, and with several minor alterations. The publisher was John Camden Hotten, of Piccadilly.

Considering the circumstances of the time, the vein in which this book is conceived must have appeared singularly infelicitous; but it may be that burlesque was the author's strong point, and certainly this comic paraphrase exhibits considerable cleverness in its close parallel with the original, while the humour, although it perhaps relies too frequently upon the alcoholic vagaries of the chief character, is at times irresistible.

A remarkable peculiarity of the work is that it forms a burlesque, in part without an original, for the story is carried to a definite conclusion. It is a book with a theory, too. Whether a seriously advanced theory or not it would be difficult to say, but the clue is derived from chapter iii. of *Edwin Drood*, wherein a suggestion of dual consciousness in man is illustrated by the strange remark: "If I hide my watch when I am drunk, I must be drunk again before I can remember where."

In the adaptation, Mr. John Bumstead (Jasper) divides his affections amongst three objects: his nephew, an umbrella, and powerful stimulants. Under the influence of the last-named he disposes of the two others and fails to recollect their whereabouts, until Mr. Tracey Clews (Datchery), following an inspiration, screws him up to precisely the same condition of inebriety as before, when discovery results.

Space forbids any but the briefest quotation from Mr. Newell's book, but the following extracts from the chapter describing Jasper's meeting with his nephew at the gatehouse may convey some idea of the author's methods:—

"Mr. Bumstead, lighting his lamp, has, abstractedly, almost covered it with his hat . . . but you can just detect, above the mantel, an unfinished sketch of a schoolgirl. There is no artistic merit in this picture; in which, indeed, a simple triangle on end represents the waist, another, and slightly larger triangle the skirts, and straight lines, with rake-like terminations, the arms and hands. . . . A young man fourteen years old enters the room with his carpet bag.

"'My dear boys! My dear Edwins!'

"Thus speaking, Mr. Bumstead sidles eagerly at the new-comer, with open arms, and falling upon his neck, does so too heavily, and bears him with a crash to the ground. Mr. Bumstead rises slowly, and with dignity.

"Excuse me, my dear Edwin. I thought there were two of you."

". . . Mr. Bumstead motions with his whole right side towards an adjacent room in which a table is spread, and leads the way thither in a half circle. After dinner Edwin Drood produces pea-nuts. Bumstead, with a wet towel round his head, drinks a great deal of water.

"'Crack!' on Edwin Drood's part.

"'Hic!' on Mr. Bumstead's part. . . .

"Mr. Bumstead, very carefully poising himself on both feet, puts on his hat over the wet towel, gives a sudden horrified glance downward towards one of his boots, and leaps frantically over an object.

"'Why, that was only my cane,' says Edwin.

"Mr. Bumstead breathes hard, and leans heavily on his nephew as they go out together."

(*To be continued.*)

THE SCENE OF THE BAGMAN'S STORY

By HAMMOND HALL
AUTHOR OF "MR. PICKWICK'S KENT"

IN the July number of *The Dickensian* Mr. Arthur Schomberg asks: "Has the inn in which Tom Smart wooed and won the widow ever been identified?" Eight years ago I addressed this question to the Rev. W. H. Davis, Vicar of Avebury, who very kindly interested himself in the matter. He was inclined to favour "an old-fashioned thatched inn called the 'White Hart,' at West Kennet, on the main Bristol road, which was, about 1820, kept by a widow named Shugnell," and of which a drawing existed. There were, however, at least two obstacles to the identification. One was the fact that the "White Hart" was on the wrong side of the road; the other, more serious, was the doubt whether the date of its conversion into a brewery, certainly antecedent to the writing of *Pickwick*, was not antecedent also to Dickens's knowledge of the road. In these circumstances Mr. Davis referred the question to the Rev. A. C. Smith, author of *British and Roman Antiquities of North Wilts*, and for many years Rector of Yarbury. Mr. Smith, who has since died, sent the following very interesting notes. He wrote:—

"I cannot encourage your notion as to the 'White Hart' at Kennet. I was at Eton when *Pickwick* was first published, and I took in the numbers as they came out. I have my original copy now before me, well thumbed and somewhat the worse for wear. When 'The Bagman's Story' appeared I think I may safely say that all North Wiltshiremen at once identified the inn as that at Shepherd's Shore. . . . To us who live at Devizes Shepherd's Shore is strictly on the Marlborough Downs. . . . Is there in all England a spot better calculated than Shepherd's Shore for the bleak, desolate, exposed road as described by the Bagman? . . . From Beckhampton to Shepherd's Shore there is a three-mile stretch of as howling a wilderness as you may find anywhere, and from Shepherd's Shore towards Devizes another two miles of equally exposed road. During the thirty-seven years of my holding the rectory of Yarbury my father and mother lived here (Devizes), and I was very frequently on the road from Beckhampton to Devizes—I may say nearly every week—on horseback or on wheels, at all seasons and in every sort of weather, and I know well by experience how rough the weather and how exposed the road was at times; indeed, stage coachmen used to declare (I have often heard them) that there was no spot from London to Bristol so bleak and exposed as that."

I have never had time and opportunity to pursue the matter farther. I do not even know whether the inn referred to is yet in existence, but I believe that its traditional connexion with "The Bagman's Story" is mentioned in Mr. Smith's *British and Roman Antiquities of North Wilts*.

"This is the Reverend Archibald Duke, a very dyspeptic and evangelical man, who takes the gloomiest view of mankind and the prospects, and thinks the immense sale of the *Pickwick Papers*, recently completed, one of the strongest proofs of original sin."—*Scenes from Clerical Life*. By George Eliot.

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NEW PICTORIAL POST CARDS

WE have received a series of photograph cards of the most prominent places and scenes in Rochester, Chatham, Stroud, and New Brompton from Messrs. John Walker and Co., of Warwick Lane. There are fifty views in all, most artistically reproduced, many of which, naturally, have a direct Dickensian interest. These comprise such places as Sapsea's House, High Street, Rochester; Walls's Charity, interior and exterior; Eastgate House; Guildhall; The Bull Hotel; Jaspar's Gatehouse; The Castle, etc. For the benefit of collectors, the numbers of these were given in our "Dickensiana" page last month.

We have also received from Mr. Goldwin, of Rochester, a set of six cards representing scenes in Canterbury connected with *David Copperfield.* These are reproduced from excellent photographs taken by Mr. T. W. Tyrrell, and bear appropriate quotations from the novel.

DICKENSIANA MONTH BY MONTH

"Bleak House," "Little Dorrit," "Tale of Two Cities," "Great Expectations" and "Hard Times." In Macmillan's India Paper Editions. 2s. net and 3s. net.

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"Boz-on-Sea" (Broadstairs). By Harold Begbie. *Daily Mail*, 22 July.

"The Drood Case." By Andrew Lang. *Morning Post*, 28 July.

"The Mystery of Edwin Drood: the Disguise of Helena" (reply to William Archer's second article). By J. Cuming Walters. *Morning Leader*, 26 July.

"The George Inn" (Amesbury). *Saturday Review*, 29 July.

"The Mystery of Edwin Drood" (third article). By William Archer. *Morning Leader*, 29 July.

"The Plot of Edwin Drood." By Andrew Lang. *Academy*, 29 July.

"The Clearing of a Mystery." By Harry Beswick. *Clarion*, 28 July.

"Round Rochester in Dickens Land." By W. C. B. Whitwell. Illustrated. *Cycling*, 2 August.

"The Drood Case." Letter from J. Cuming Walters. *Morning Post*, 8 August.

"In Mr. Pickwick's Footsteps: with a New Dickens Character." *Daily Mail*, 9 August.

"Kipling and Dickens." *T. P.'s Weekly*, 11 August.

"The Plot of Edwin Drood." Letter from J. Cuming Walters. *Academy*, 12 August.

"The Novelist of the Country." By Walter Dexter. Illustrated. *The Country-side*, 12 August.

"At the Sign of the Ship." Interview between Dr. Watson and Sherlock Holmes on the Drood Mystery. By Andrew Lang. *Longman's Mag.*, Sept.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE

LONDON

FELLOWSHIP DRAMATIC CLUB

THE proposal to form a Dramatic Club in connexion with the Fellowship has met with a good response, and it has been arranged to have the organizing meeting at St. Bride's Institute, Bride Lane, Fleet Street, E.C., on Monday, 4 September, at 8 o'clock The meeting will be open to all members, whether they have intimated their intention of joining or not, and it is hoped there will be a good attendance. The proposals are: To found a club, with an annual subscription of 5s.; members to have tickets to that value for performances; to give three performances of plays during the coming winter. There is no doubt that such a club could be made a success, both socially and financially, and there seems every likelihood that such will be the case. Mr. James Chapman, who is well known as an amateur actor, has undertaken to devote his energies to it.

MELBOURNE BRANCH

THERE was a large attendance of members and friends at the monthly meeting held on 14 June.

An excellent programme was contributed. Miss Fraser read a splendid

character study of Esther Summerson (*Bleak House*), Mr. Frank Scrivenor gave a reading, "Betsey Trotwood and the Murdstones," and Mr. Du Soir, Vice-President, who presided, gave an address on "Bleak House" and a reading, "Flight of Lady Dedlock."

The July meeting was held in Glen's Concert Hall, Collins Street. The Hon. Secretary read an extract from a letter from the General Secretary of the parent Society stating that ours was now the third largest branch, being beaten only by Portsmouth and Sheffield. At the present time the roll numbers 382 members, and our branch is only ten months old. The Rev. E. Rorke, Vice-President, pursuant to notice of motion, moved the following resolution, which was carried unanimously: "That the minimum subscription next year be 2s. 6d." The first year's experience of working the branch has shown that it cannot be carried on successfully on the nominal subscription of 1s. With the increased subscription it is hoped to extend the influence of the fellowship and engage in some charitable work. The programme for the evening was one of the best yet given.

BLACKHEATH, LEE, LEWISHAM BRANCH.

THE ladies' needlework party in connexion with this branch has arranged a garden party, concert, and sale of work, to take place on Thursday, 7th inst., at 4.30 p.m., at Sangley Hall, Catford. The house and grounds, which will be decorated and illuminated at night, are a few minutes' walk from both South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover stations, and close to the Catford terminus of the Lewisham and Greenwich Tramways. Among the many attractions being arranged will be a concert under the direction of Mrs. Clement Foster, an exhibition of old needlework arranged by Mrs. Gladstone, palmistry, refreshments, and dancing. A number of fancy and useful articles made by the members will be on sale. The arrangements are in the hands of a committee, of which Mrs. E. I. Hall is Hon. Sec. They hope to be able to extend a welcome to many metropolitan members of the Fellowship, and those from other branches. Tickets may be obtained from Mrs. Hall, 33 Albyn Road, St. Johns, S.E., of any member of the committee, or from the Hon. Sec. of the branch, Mr. James E. Palmer, 2 Marischal Road, Lee, S.E.

YORK AND LEEDS BRANCHES.

On Saturday, 12 August, a number of the members of the York and Leeds branches of the Dickens Fellowship united in an excursion to Coxwold and Byland Abbey. The object in view was to cultivate the spirit of fellowship, not only amongst the individual members, but also between the branches; and the result was most encouraging. Favoured with beautiful weather, amid the charming surroundings of Coxwold a delightfully pleasant time was spent, and the success was all that could be wished.

Tea was served at the quaint village inn at Coxwold, after which speeches were made by the Rev. E. L. Perry (York branch), Mr. F. Kidson (Leeds branch), and Mr. Medd (York branch).

The historic church was visited and the renowned "Shandy Hall," where Laurence Sterne wrote *Tristram Shandy* and *Sentimental Journey*, 150 years ago. The happy associations of this delightful excursion will long be remembered.

DIARY OF DICKENS MEETINGS

Sept. 2. Conference of Branch Secretaries at headquarters, to be followed by a Dinner at Carr's Restaurant, Strand, at 7.15.

,, 4. Fellowship Dramatic Club. First meeting at St. Bride's Institute, at 8 o'clock. Open to all.

,, 27. Meeting of Needlework Guild at St. Bride's Institute.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD

To the Editor of "The Dickensian"

SIR,—I have not yet had the pleasure of reading Mr. J. Cuming Walters's *Clues to Dickens's "Mystery of Edwin Drood,"* but the interesting review of it by Mr. Matz in the July number of the *Dickensian* moves me to point out the curious fact that the most distinguished of Mr. Walters's predecessors in the study of the "mystery" overlooked the authoritative clues furnished by Forster. Mr. Matz gives 1887 as the date of publication of the "loving study" in which the late Richard Proctor "set himself to prove that Drood was not murdered." I am at this moment remote from works of reference, but I believe I am right in saying that the last volume of Forster's *Life of Dickens* was published in 1875. A reference to this would have shown Proctor that Drood was indubitably dead. Forster relates how it was originally intended that the interest of the story should arise out of "the going apart from one another" of two young people "pledged to be married after many years," and how in August, 1869, Dickens wrote to him: "I laid aside the fancy I told you of, and have a very curious and new idea for my new story." Forster gives the following outline of this idea :—

"The story, I learnt immediately afterwards, was to be that of the murder of a nephew by his uncle, the originality of which was to consist in the review of the murderer's career by himself at the close, when its temptations were to be dwelt upon as if not he, the culprit, but some other man, were the tempted. The last chapters were to be written in the condemned cell to which his wickedness, all elaborately elicited from him as if told by another, had brought him."

In chapter xxiii.—the last of the uncompleted story—the murderer, his brain fuddled by the drug habit, has already begun to incriminate himself under the expert stimulation of the old opium woman. One can scarcely doubt that she was to have been the chief instrument in "elaborately eliciting" the details of his wickedness. Forster's reference to the condemned cell is borne out by a statement made by Mr. Luke Fildes to the late Mr. Hughes (*Rambles in Dickensland*) to the effect that Dickens had intended to take him, Mr. Fildes, to sketch the interior of a condemned cell, probably at Maidstone jail. Forster's narrative continues :—

"Discovery by the murderer of the utter needlessness of the murder, for its object was to follow hard upon commission of the deed."

This discovery, it will be remembered, is made in chapter xv., with startling effect.

"All discovery of the murderer" (continues Forster) "was to be baffled till towards the close, when, by means of a gold ring which had resisted the corrosive effects of the lime into which he had thrown the body, not only the person murdered was to be identified, but the locality of the crime and the man who committed it. So much was told to me before any of the book was written ; and it will be recollected that the ring, taken by Drood to be given to his betrothed only if their engagement went on, was brought away with him after their last interview."

It will be recollected also :—

1. That whereas John Jasper "had an inventory in his mind of all the jewellery his gentleman relative even wore, namely his watch and chain and his shirt-pin"—articles which were removed from Drood's body and thrown into Cloisterham Weir — he was not aware on the eve of Drood's disappearance that he carried in the breast-pocket of his coat the ring confided to him by Mr. Grewgious.

2. That John Jasper knew there was outside the residence of Durdles a mound of lime, "quick enough to eat your boots ; with a little handy stirring quick enough to eat your bones."

In view of Forster's statement, and its corroboration by the story as far as it goes, there is hardly room for doubt that Drood was murdered by Jasper. There is evidence that the last walk of uncle and nephew followed the route taken by Jasper and Durdles, as described in chapter xii., that the tragedy took place in the great tower of the cathedral; that there was "no struggle, no consciousness of peril, no entreaty" (chapter xxiii.); and that the body was concealed either in the crypt or in the Sapsea vault. Mr. Luke Fildes came to the conclusion from Dickens's remarks to him that the long scarf worn by Jasper was an instrument of the crime, and this is likely enough.

Finally, Forster indicates how the other characters would have been disposed of had their creator lived to finish his task. He says:—

"Rosa was to marry Tartar, and Crisparkle, the sister of Landless, who was himself, I think, to have perished in assisting Tartar finally to unmask and seize the murderer."

My recollection is that Mr. Proctor's deductive method led him to these same conclusions, a fact which renders all the more remarkable his disbelief in the death of Drood.

Yours faithfully,

HAMMOND HALL.

THE "BLUE DRAGON" OF "MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT"

To the Editor of "The Dickensian"

DEAR SIR,—It would be unfortunate that this little matter should attain the importance of a *quæstio vexata*. I have, therefore, the pleasure to accept the ruling of your Paddington correspondent, and willingly adopt the authority of Mr. C. G. Harper's book as trustworthy and conclusive.

In reference to the westward time-table quoted by Mr. Gibbons in relation to the *Amesbury* route (from 1837 onwards), allow me to remark that the author, also speaking by the card, gives—first in order—a similarly detailed time-table for the Devonport Mail via SALISBURY, the latter being the established "Quicksilver" route *until* 1837 (see Vol. II, p. 31). I need not occupy your space by quotation *in extenso*. During the year above mentioned and thereafter, the course of the coach was changed to "the upper road by Amesbury and Ilminster."

Martin Chuzzlewit having been originally published in 1843-4, it should be borne in mind that the action of the tale, *looking backward*, would include a term of at least seven or eight years, in accordance with the suggestions of its final chapter, as well as the twelve months (there or thereabouts) of its previous history. It would thus be brought fairly within the limit of the "Quicksilver" period, when the Devonport Mail was still running by way "of the fair old town of Salisbury."

It is abundantly evident that the Chuzzlewit story deals exclusively with that county capital as a place of calling, arrival, and departure for the London coach (note specially that delightful thirty-sixth chapter), and refers to its *direct* metropolitan journey thence; which journey could be conveniently joined *en route*—at two miles' distance—from a contiguous village as already indicated.

The main question raised for consideration relates to the locality of the village aforesaid and the whereabouts of "The Blue Dragon."

Faithfully yours in fellowship,

BRIXTON, *August 8th*, 1905. ROBERT ALLBUT.

DICKENS'S RECIPE FOR PUNCH

To the Editor of "The Dickensian"

DEAR SIR,—The word milk which puzzles Mr. Yapp should presumably be silk, which it would be quite natural to use as a strainer.

Yours faithfully,

HADLOW, KENT, *1st August*, 1905. H. SNOWDEN WARD.

THE COACH AND HORSES, ISLEWORTH